CLAIMS:

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What is claimed is:

1 1. A method for answering a wireless telephone, the 2 method comprising:

3 receiving an incoming\call;

responsive to a determination that automatic call answering has been selected by a user, answering the incoming call by providing the calling party with an indication that the user will take the call momentarily and placing the wireless telephone in mute mode until the user has taken the incoming call.

2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the indication that the user will take the call momentarily provides an indication to the calling party that the user will be using a speech phrase generator to conduct a conversation.

1 3. The method as recited in claim $\langle 2, \text{ further} \rangle$

2 comprising:

3 providing audio of the calling party to the user;

4 and

5 responsive to selection of a speech phrase by the

o user, sending a speech phrase to the calling party.

1 4. The method as recited in claim 3, wherein the speech

2 phrase is prerecorded.

- 1 5. The method as recited in claim 3, wherein the speech
- 2 phrase is generated using a voice generation unit.
- 1 6. The method as recited in claim 1, further
- 2 comprising:

notifying the user of the incoming call; and presenting the user with options as to how to dispose of the call.

1 7. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the

- 2 options include allowing automatic call answering to
- 3 answer the incoming call and at least one of allowing the
- 4 user to answer the incoming call, allowing voice mail to
- 5 take the incoming call, and allowing the incoming call to
- 6 go unanswered.
- 1 8. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step
- 2 of providing the calling party with an indication that
- 3 the user will take the call momentarily includes sending
- 4 a voice message to the calling party.
- 1 9. The method as recited in claim $\setminus 8$, wherein the voice
- 2 message is a prerecorded message.
- 1 10. The method as recited in claim 8, wherein the voice
- 2 message is generated by a voice generation unit.

- 1 11. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step
- 2 of providing the calling party with an indication that
- 3 the user will take the call momentarily includes sending
- 4 a text message to the calling party.
- 1 12. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step
- 2 of providing the calling party with an indication that
- 3 the user will take the call momentarily comprises a
 - selectable message selected from a plurality of possible
- 5 messages.
- 1 13. The method as recited in claim 12, wherein the
- 2 selectable message is selected based on the identity of
- 3 the calling party.
- 1 14. The method as recited in claim 12, wherein the
- 2 selectable message is selected based on the time.
- 1 15. The method as recited in claim 12, wherein the
- 2 selectable message is selected by the user.
- 1 16. A computer program product in a computer readable
- 2 media for use in a wireless telephone for answering the
- 3 wireless telephone, the computer program product
- 4 comprising:
- first instructions for receiving an incoming call;
- 6 second instructions, responsive to a determination
- 7 that automatic call answering has been selected by a
- 8 user, for answering the incoming call by providing the

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- 1 calling party with an indication that the user will take
- 2 the call momentarily and placing the wireless telephone
- 3 in mute mode until the user\has taken the incoming call.
- 1 17. The computer program product as recited in claim 16,
- 2 wherein the indication that the user will take the call
- 3 momentarily provides an indication to the calling party
- 4 that the user will be using a speech phrase generator to 5 conduct a conversation.
 - 18. The computer program product as recited in claim 17, further comprising:
- 3 third instructions for providing audio of the
- 4 calling party to the user; and
- fourth instructions, responsive to selection of a
- 6 speech phrase by the user, for sending a speech phrase to
- 7 the calling party.
- 1 19. The computer program product as recited in claim 18,
- 2 wherein the speech phrase is prerecorded.
- 1 20. The computer program product as recited in claim 18,
- 2 wherein the speech phrase is generated using a voice
- 3 generation unit.
- 1 21. The computer program product as recited in claim 16,
- 2 further comprising:
- 3 third instructions for notifying the user of the
- 4 incoming call; and

- fourth instructions for presenting the user with
- 6 options as to how to dispose of the call.
- 1 22. The computer program \product as recited in claim 16,
- 2 wherein the options include allowing automatic call
- 3 answering to answer the incoming call and at least one of
- 4 allowing the user to answer the incoming call, allowing
- 5 voice mail to take the incoming call, and allowing the
 - incoming call to go unanswered.
- 1 23. The computer program product as recited in claim 16,
- 2 wherein the instructions for providing the calling party
- 3 with an indication that the user\will take the call
- 4 momentarily includes sending a voice message to the
- 5 calling party.
- 1 24. The computer program product as recited in claim 23,
- 2 wherein the voice message is a prerecorded message.
- 1 25. The computer program product as recited in claim 23,
- 2 wherein the voice message is generated by a voice
- 3 generation unit.
- 1 26. The computer program product as recited in claim 16,
- 2 wherein the instructions for providing the calling party
- 3 with an indication that the user will take the call
- 4 momentarily includes sending a text message to the
- 5 calling party.

- 1 27. The computer program product as recited in claim 16,
- 2 wherein the instructions \for providing the calling party
- 3 with an indication that the user will take the call
- 4 momentarily comprises a selectable message selected from
- 5 a plurality of possible messages.
- 1 28. The computer program product as recited in claim 27, 2 wherein the selectable message is selected based on the 3 identity of the calling party.
- 1 29. The computer program product as recited in claim 27,
- 2 wherein the selectable message\is selected based on the
- 3 time.
- 1 30. The computer program product as recited in claim 27,
- 2 wherein the selectable message is selected by the user.
- 1 31. A wireless telephone, the wireless telephone
- 2 comprising:
- 3 a receiver which receives an \incoming call;
- 4 an automatic answering unit which, responsive to a
- 5 determination that automatic call answering has been
- 6 selected by a user, answers the indoming call by
- 7 providing the calling party with an indication that the
- 8 user will take the call momentarily and placing the
- 9 wireless telephone in mute mode until the user has taken
- 10 the incoming call.

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- 1 32. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 31,
- 2 wherein the indication that the user will take the call
- 3 momentarily provides an indication to the calling party
- 4 that the user will be using a speech phrase generator to
- 5 conduct a conversation.
- 33. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 32,
- 2 further comprising:
 - a speaker which provides audio of the calling party to the user; and
- a speech generator which responsive to selection of
- 6 a speech phrase by the user, sends a speech phrase to the
- 7 calling party.
- 1 34. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 33,
- 2 wherein the speech phrase is prerecorded.
- 1 35. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 33,
- 2 wherein the speech phrase is generated using a voice
- 3 generation unit.
- 1 36. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 31,
- 2 further comprising:
- a call notification unit which notifies the user of
- 4 the incoming call; and
- an option presentation unit which presents the user
- 6 with options as to how to dispose of the call.

- 1 37. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 31,
- 2 wherein the options include allowing automatic call
- 3 answering to answer the incoming call and at least one of
- 4 allowing the user to answer the incoming call, allowing
- 5 voice mail to take the incoming call, and allowing the
- 6 incoming call to go unanswered.
- 1 38. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 31,
- 2 wherein the instructions for providing the calling party
- 3 with an indication that the user will take the call
- 4 momentarily includes sending a voice message to the
- 5 calling party.
- 1 39. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 38,
- 2 wherein the voice message is a prerecorded message.
- 1 40. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 38,
- 2 wherein the voice message is generated by a voice
- 3 generation unit.
- 1 41. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 31,
- 2 wherein providing the calling party with an indication
- 3 that the user will take the call momentarily includes
- 4 sending a text message to the calling party.
- 1 42. The wireless telephone as recited in claim 31,
- 2 wherein providing the calling party with an indication

- 3 that the user will take the call momentarily comprises a
- selectable message selected from a plurality of possible 4
- 5 messages.
- The wireless telephone as recited in claim 42, 1
- wherein the selectable message is selected based on the
- identity of the calling party.
- The wireless telephone as recited in claim 42, 1
- 2 wherein the selectable message is selected based on the
- 3 time.
- The wireless telephone as \recited in claim 42, 1
- 2 wherein the selectable message is selected by the user.

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